

A NEW SPECIES OF *EUCOMIS* L'HERIT. (LILIACEAE) FROM SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

A new species of *Eucomis* L'Hérit. from the Drakensberg of Natal and Lesotho and mountains of the Eastern Cape is described.

UITTREKSEL

'N NUWE *EUCOMIS*-SOORT (LILIAECEAE) VAN SUID-AFRIKA

'n Nuwe soort van *Eucomis* L'Hérit. van die Drakensberge van Natal en berge van die Oos-Kaap word beskryf.

INTRODUCTION

During a taxonomic study of the South African representatives of the genus *Eucomis* L'Hérit. it became clear that *Eucomis regia* (L.) L'Hérit. previously known as *E. nana* (Burm.f.) L'Hérit. (Reyneke, 1974) is confined to the South Western Cape Province. Specimens from Natal, Lesotho and the Eastern Cape Province previously named *E. regia* did not agree with either *E. regia* or any other described species, and are here described as a new species. This brings the total number of *Eucomis* species to ten of which five are endemic in the Republic of South Africa.

DESCRIPTION.

Eucomis schijffii Reyneke spec. nov. similis *E. regiae* (L.) L'Hérit., sed distinguatur floribus in scapum non impressis, filamentis ac perigonio purpureis, et quod aestate floret.

Bulb pearshaped to ovoid, surface rough, imbricate. *Leaves* 3 to 4, seldom more than 4, ovate, without purple spots, not carinated, usually prostrate, lateral veins prominent above as grooves and as dark green stripes below, 60 to 100 (170) mm long and 40 to 70 mm broad, margin smooth or minutely crisped. *Inflorescence* a raceme or pseudospike, 25 to 30 mm in diameter. *Peduncle* solitary, club shaped, 20 to 70 mm long, sometimes with purple spots. Flowering part of spike 10 to 20 mm long, seldom with purple spots. *Fertile bracts* shorter than flowers, sagitate, 2 to 3 mm long and 5 mm broad at base of spike, 8 to 10 mm long and 3 mm broad at apex of inflorescence, young bracts with purple margins, older bracts without purple margins. *Coma* (viz. sterile bracts at apex of inflorescence) consists of 10 to

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FIG. 1.

Eucomis schijffii Reyneke. A plant from Cathedral Peak collected by P. Vorster of the Botanical Research Institute.

15 bracts, declinate, bracts oval, 15 to 20 mm long and 10 to 20 (25) mm broad. *Flowers* 10 to 20 in number, close to one another. *Pedicles* absent or 1 (2) mm long. *Perianth* segments dark purple, c. 10 mm long and 5 mm broad, fused at the base. *Stamens* fused with perigone below. *Filaments* purple, triangular c. 6 mm long. *Ovary* trilocular, green, slightly purplish below, apically grooved between the three loculi, c. 3 mm long. *Style* green at base, purple apically, c. 5 mm long. *Stigma* white. *Fruit* an inflated, dehiscent capsule, pericarp thin and membranous, purplish. *Seeds*, axile, c. 5 in each locule, ovate with brown testa.

Flowering from the middle of December to the end of February.

Type: Natal—2829 (Harrismith): Cathedral Peak, Twins Cave (-CC), *Vorster 45* (PRE!, holo.).

DISTRIBUTION. See Fig. 2.

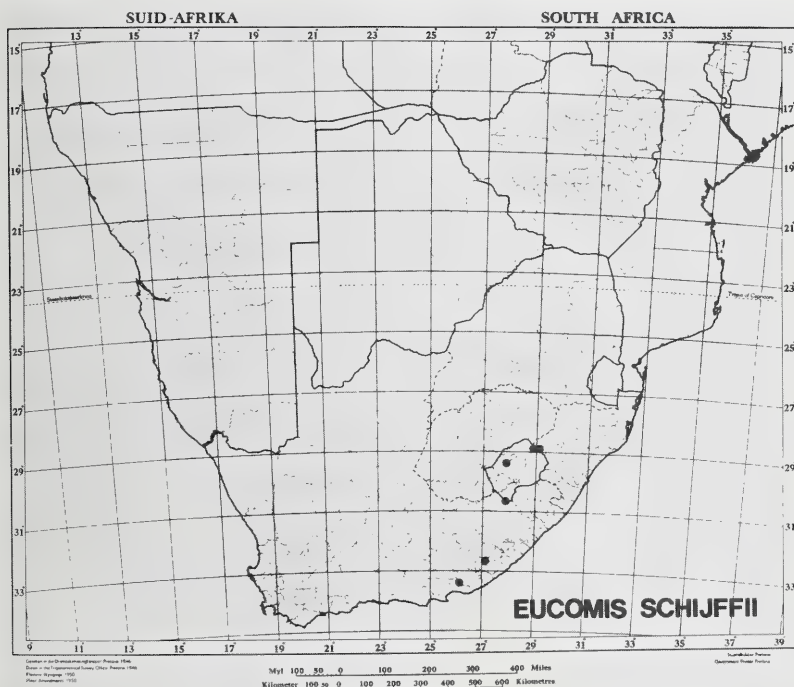


FIG. 2.
The known distribution of *Eucomis schiffii* Reyneke.

Drakensberg of Natal and Lesotho and mountains of the Eastern Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa.

NATAL—2828 (Bethlehem): Mont-aux-Sources (-DD), open grassveld, *Bayer & McClean 264* (NU and PRE); The Sentinel, *Steyn 1110* (NBG).

—2829 (Harrismith): Cathedral Peak Forest Station (-CC), *Schelpé 91* (NU), 917 (NH); Twins Cave, *Vorster 45* (PRE!, holo.) 38, 39, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48 (PRE).

LESOTHO—2927 (Maseru): Berea (-BD), Mamlapi, in shade along stream, *Marais 1297* (PRE), *Compton 21412* (NBG), *Jacot Guillarmod 596* (PRE).

—2928 (Marakabei): Maluti Mountains (-AC)?, *Dieterlen 1263* (PRE).

CAPE PROVINCE—3027 (Lady Grey): Ben Macdhui (-DB), Doodmanskrans, Galpin 6869 (PRE).

—3227 (Stutterheim): Hogsback (-CA), Story s.n. (PRE).

—3326 (Grahamstown): Alicedale (-AC), Cruden s.n. (GRA).

E. schijffii (Fig. 1) is the smallest of all the *Eucomis* species and it was formerly placed with *E. regia* (L.) L'Hérit. It is distinguished inter alia from *E. regia*, which flowers in the late winter, by flowering in the late summer. It also differs from the former species in that the perigone and filaments are coloured a vivid purple and that the flowers are not sunken into the scape. The perigone of *E. regia* is green with a purplish appearance at the base and margin, while the filaments are green and the flowers sunken into the scape.

The author takes great pleasure in naming this species *Eucomis schijffii* in recognition of the valuable contribution which Professor H. P. van der Schijff has rendered to the study of the morphology of South African plants.

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REFERENCE

- REYNEKE, W. F. 1974. The identity of *Eucomis nana* (Burm.f.) L'Hérit. *Jl S. Afr. Bot.* **40** (1): 61–63.